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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**DROP IN MINORITY REPRESENTATION IN THE QUEBEC PUBLIC SERVICE
UNACCEPTABLE**

Only 3.6 percent of Quebec public servants come from the minority communities. The latest study by the Government of Quebec shows a 16 percent drop in minority representation from a year ago when a similar study indicated that the cultural communities made up an already unacceptably low 4.3 percent of the public service. The same study showed that the English-speaking community represented less than one percent of the public service.

Reacting to the report entitled Présence des femmes, des hommes et des membres de groupes cibles dans la fonction publique du Québec, Alliance Quebec President Royal Orr said, "This report demonstrates clearly the inadequacy of existing measures to promote minority representation. Successive governments have recognized the problem, however, their actions have fallen far short of their promises. As early as 1972, studies showed that English-speaking Quebecers were less than one percent of the civil service -- that's still true. We clearly are not making any progress. This situation won't change until there is enough political will in the government to make it a priority".

Orr added, "I find it shocking that there are fewer than 400 English-speaking Quebecers in the public service. It is unacceptable that the English-speaking community and the cultural minorities which represent 20 percent of the population are virtually unrepresented in the public service. To respond effectively to the needs of Quebecers, the public service must reflect the diversity of our society. Lack of minority participation often reduces the responsiveness of government to the needs of these communities. An affirmative action programme is clearly needed to break this vicious circle, other measures simply haven't worked".

The provincial government is the largest employer in Quebec with over 52,000 permanent employees. The study undertaken by the government's Office of Human Resources states that there are only 1,891 members of the cultural communities in the public service. The government defines the members of the cultural communities as all non-francophones, those born outside Canada and the visible minorities. Those who work in Crown Corporations or in the para-public sectors (i.e. schools, hospitals, etc.) are not included in the study.

Mr. Orr concluded by saying "Alliance Quebec calls on the Government of Quebec to immediately adopt concrete measures to increase minority representation".

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